

## Member Organisations of New Forest Consultative Panel

29 February 2008

Dear Panel Member

### **THE MINISTER'S MANDATE**

The Minister's Mandate is in effect the Forestry Commission's 'licence to operate' in the Crown lands of the New Forest. It was introduced in 1971 and has been revised on a number of occasions since then. The latest Mandate was presented to the Commission in 1999. A copy can be obtained at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-6a4krt> or by contacting Ros Taylor via email [ros.taylor@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ros.taylor@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) or phone 023 8028 3141.

The current Minister's Mandate for the New Forest is due for review and renewal in 2008. Since the Mandate was presented to the Forestry Commission in 1999 the New Forest has seen considerable change, not least the establishment of the New Forest National Park and the completion of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Management Plan. Any future Mandate would need to take account of those changes and the new legislation and governance arrangements for the area.

Preparation of the Management Plan for the National Park is due for completion in March 2009. The National Park Management Plan will establish the framework for future actions to secure and enhance the area's special qualities and the Forestry Commission, who are responsible for the management of 47% of the Park area, will play a full part in its delivery.

Given the time scale for the preparation of the National Park Management Plan the Forestry Commission has been asked by its Minister to seek views locally about whether it is better for the Mandate to be reviewed in 2008 as originally intended or after the National Park Management Plan is completed. Should the review be deferred then our Minister would extend the existing Mandate over the intervening period.

This letter therefore seeks the view of your organisation as to whether the current Minister's Mandate is:

reviewed in 2008 as originally intended, or  
extended unchanged until the National Park Management Plan is completed in 2009,  
and then reviewed in light of that document.

I would be welcome your views by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2008 following which the Forestry Commission will report back to its Minister on responses received and seek agreement as to the way ahead thereafter.

I attach a simple form that you may wish to use for your reply. This is also available as a word document from Ros Taylor (contact details above).

If you require any additional information about this matter, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely

Michael Seddon  
Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest

